

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 NEA-10 ISO-00 AF-10 CIAE-00 H-03 INR-10

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 ACDA-19 DRC-01 /143 W

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6819

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

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CINCUSAREUR

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 00175

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, IO, UK

SUBJECT: DIEGO GARCIA - INDIAN OCEAN TASK GROUP

REF: (A) STATE 252325; (B) TEHRAN 0043

SUMMARY: WE DISCUSSED DIEGO GARCIA POLICY WITH FCO ON JANUARY 3. FCO REITERATED THAT HMG POLICY IS FIRST TO BE HELPFUL TO U.S. BUT THAT CONSULTATION AND AGREEMENT BETWEEN USG AND HMG IS NECESSARY IF ISLAND IS TO BE USED FOR ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF 1972 DIEGO GARCIA AGREEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JANUARY 3 WE DISCUSSED HMG VIEWS ON FUTURE USE OF DIEGO GARCIA WITH JACKSON, HEAD OF FCO DEFENSE DEPARTMENT. WE RAISED ISSUE IN CONTEXT OF SYKES/SLOSS CONVERSATION REPORTED REF A.
2. JACKSON BEGAN CONVERSATION BY STRESSING THAT FCO'S FIRST REACTION TO EVERY U.S. REQUEST TO CONDUCT NEW ACTIVITIES AT DIEGO GARCIA IS TO TRY TO BE HELPFUL. THUS FCO HAS CONSISTENTLY RECOMMENDED TO MINISTERS THAT HMG FACILITATE THESE REQUESTS. BUT AT SAME TIME FCO MUST LOOK AT POLITICAL AND LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS OF DIEGO

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GARCIA ACTIVITIES TO PROTECT HMG INTERESTS.

3. SPEAKING FIRST OF LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS, JACKSON

RIGHT TO "CONSTRUCT, MAINTAIN AND OPERATE A LIMITED NAVAL COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY" ON DIEGO GARCIA. FCO HAS INTERPRETED THIS AS BROADLY AS POSSIBLE IN THE SENSE THAT ANY ACTIVITY IN CONNECTION WITH COMMUNICATIONS DOES NOT REQUIRE ASSENT OF HMG. AS EXAMPLE OF THIS, JACKSON SAID THAT HE HAD ORIGINALLY PROPOSED THAT HMG GIVE VERBAL ASSENT TO P-3 OPERATIONS AS WITHIN SCOPE OF AGREEMENT BUT FCO LEGAL ADVISORS COULD NOT AGREE THAT RECONNAISSANCE IS IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNICATIONS AND THUS HELD OUT FOR EXCHANGE OF LETTERS.

4. IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO NEGOTIATE AN AMENDMENT TO 1972 AGREEMENT IF THE U.S. WISHES TO CONDUCT NEW, NON-COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITIES FROM DIEGO GARCIA ON A PERMANENT BASIS. EXAMPLES MIGHT BE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHTS, FLEET SUPPORT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS BUNKERING. THIS WOULD BE PARTICULARLY TRUE IF NEW ACTIVITIES REQUIRED NEW CONSTRUCTION. BUT IT MIGHT NOT BE NECESSARY TO PUBLISH AMENDMENT DEPENDING ON NATURE OF NEW ACTIVITIES. HMG DID NOT ADVISE PARLIAMENT OF 1973 AGREEMENT ON EXPANDING THE COMMUNICATIONS FACILITY SINCE EXPANSION IS "WITHIN THE SCOPE" OF THE 1972 AGREEMENT.

5. ON POLITICAL SIDE, HMG IS CONCERNED ABOUT DIEGO GARCIA BECAUSE IT IS IDENTIFIED PUBLICLY WITH THE FACILITY AND IS COMMITTED TO PARTICIPATION IN A "LIMITED COMMUNICATIONS" OPERATION. ANY OSTENSIBLE CHANGE IN THE OPERATIONS OF THE FACILITY WOULD BE NOTICED BY INDIAN OCEAN LITTORAL STATES AND OTHERS AND WOULD HAVE TO BE CONSIDERED IN THAT LIGHT BY HMG.

6. JACKSON EMPHASIZED THAT DISCUSSION OF POLITICAL ASPECTS ABOVE IS THEORETICAL AT THIS POINT BECAUSE USG HAS NOT MADE ANY REQUESTS FOR NEW ACTIVITIES ON A

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PERMANENT BASIS. HMG HAS NO PRECONCEIVED IDEAS ABOUT APPROPRIATE OR INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES FOR DIEGO GARCIA. BUT U.S. REQUEST FOR INDEFINITE PERMISSION TO CONDUCT P-3 OPERATIONS PLUS RECENT INDICATIONS (REF A) THAT FUNDS MIGHT BE REQUESTED FROM CONGRESS TO FURTHER EXPAND U.S. FACILITIES HAVE CAUSED FCO TO BRING OUT FILES ON DIEGO GARCIA AND CONDUCT REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS RE ITS USE.

7. HMG CONTINUES TO BE PREPARED TO AGREE TO ALMOST ANY ACTIVITIES OF A TEMPORARY NATURE AT DIEGO GARCIA. JACKSON SAID THAT MINISTERS ARE NOT BEING ASKED TO REVIEW NEW P-3 REQUESTS. AS LONG AS THEY INVOLVE SPECIFIC TIME PERIODS THEY WILL BE APPROVED.

8. BUT HMG WOULD LIKE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF DEVELOPMENTS IN USG THINKING ON INDIAN OCEAN. JACKSON SAID HIS MINISTERS WERE "PUT OUT" ABOUT WHAT THEY CONSIDERED INADEQUATE INFORMATION ON THE U.S. TASK GROUP DURING THE EARLY DAYS OF ITS OPERATIONS. THIS HAS PASSED AND NOW THERE IS RELATIVE SATISFACTION IN FCO ON THIS POINT. BUT A CONTINUING DIALOGUE ON THE U.S. PRESENCE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN AS IT RELATES TO DIEGO

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GARCIA WOULD PUT HMG IN A BETTER POSITION TO SUPPORT U.S. EFFORTS.

9. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, WE CONCUR IN EMBASSY TEHRAN RECOMMENDATION (REF B) THAT STATE AND DEFENSE DEVELOP STATEMENT OF PURPOSES SERVED BY U.S. ACTIONS IN INDIAN OCEAN. IT WOULD ALSO BE MOST USEFUL TO HAVE FURTHER DETAILS ON OUR PLANS FOR DIEGO GARCIA PER PARA 2 REF A.

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